



Maine Department of Health and Human Services

Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention
(Formerly Bureau of Health)
286 Water Street
11 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0011

Brenda M. Harvey
Commissioner

Dora Anne Mills, MD, MPH
Public Health Director
Maine CDC Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT:

James A. Markiewicz
207.287.3747
James.Markiewicz@Maine.gov

A Public Health Education Initiative

MAINE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, MAINE CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION LAUNCHES "DESERVE TO KNOW" CAMPAIGN TO INCREASE HIV/AIDS TESTING

Targeted PSAs to Run in Radio and Free Print and Online Resources

AUGUSTA, Maine – June 26, 2006 —The Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC), part of the Department of Health and Human Services, today launched *DESERVE TO KNOW*, an educational campaign to increase HIV/AIDS testing through a website, public service messages (PSAs), and free print and online content.

DESERVE TO KNOW begins today throughout Maine with a concentration of PSAs as well as the rollout of campaign literature, and will continue throughout the year. The initiative targets the group hardest hit by the disease—men who have sex with men.

A total of 3 radio PSAs, a website, and four literature pieces have been produced for the initiative, and will be placed strategically across the state. The website, www.deservetoknowME.org, provides educational information about HIV testing, Hepatitis and Sexually Transmitted Disease screenings, and testing sites. In addition, literature will be distributed at pride events, private medical providers and community-based organizations.

In the more than two decades since the epidemic began, 60 million people worldwide, including more than a million in the U.S., have become infected; more than 20 million across the globe have died. In the State of Maine, more than 60% of people testing positive for HIV were gay and bisexual men.

"Our mission is to stop the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, viral hepatitis and HIV," said Dr. Dora Ann Mills, Director of the Maine CDC. "The campaign is part of an overall effort to increase HIV testing and STD screening among men who have sex with men, and promote health and wellbeing."

- more -

2-2-2-2- State of Maine Launches HIV Testing Campaign

Using a creative approach to target men who have sex with men, the Maine CDC team oversaw the production of the radio PSAs, website, and literature. The PSAs seek to promote prevention and testing and men who have sex with men, by weaving prevention messages into "everyday guy" scenarios.

The website, palm cards, and posters utilize images of the "everyday guy" with the tag line: I deserve to know. Do you?

"Our message, 'I deserve to know. Do you?' is intended to engage our target audience to ask themselves the question 'Do I deserve to know my own HIV status and that of my partner's,'" said Dr. Mills. "It is also intended to spark the conversation about HIV status awareness from an individual perspective, and among male partners. We also want to encourage men to become more comfortable in talking about testing and awareness on a regular basis."

The *DESERVE TO KNOW* campaign is 100% federally funded through the Maine Department of Health and Human Services, Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

More information about the campaign and for materials, log on to www.deservetoknowME.org.

Radio and television stations can call 207-287-3747 to get PSAs designed to increase HIV testing.

###

About Maine CDC

Our mission at Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention is to develop and deliver services to preserve, protect and promote the health and well-being of the citizens of Maine. Within the Department of Health and Human Services, the Maine CDC has responsibility for public health issues and concerns.